

207914A

**King Solomon's
GREAT SACRIFICE
AT THE DEDICATION OF HIS TEMPLE.**

SERMON

**PREACHED ON THE NINETEENTH
TRINITY SUNDAY, OCTOBER 11th 1801.**

**AT THE
DEDICATION
OF THE
NEW ERECTED**

**English Lutheran Church,
CALLED ZION: IN THE CITY OF NEW-YORK.**

By JOHN C. KUNZE, D. D.

Senior of the Lutheran Clergy in the State of New-York.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

New-York:

PRINTED BY L. NICHOLS & CO.

1801.

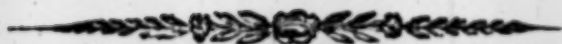
1 R 1 p. 6



AT a Conference of the Vestry of the English Lutheran Church, held the 21st October, 1801, it was resolved unanimously, That the Thanks of this House be presented to the Rev. Dr. KUNZE, for his well-adapted Sermon delivered at the Consecration of the New Evangelical English Lutheran Church, ZION ; and that the Revd. GEORGE STREBECK, and Mr. LEWIS HARTMAN, be a Committee to present him with the same ; and request of him a Copy of that Sermon for the Press.

Extract from the Minutes.

LEWIS HARTMAN, CLK.



TO THE REV. MR.

GEORGE STREBECK,

MINISTER;

AND

To the Trustees, Elders and Church-Wardens

OF THE

English Lutheran Church

In the City of New-York.

*Reverend Brother,
Much esteemed Gentlemen,*

AS you dedicated your house of worship to your God by my instrumentality, and have discovered a desire to read over again what I delivered on the occasion, I now dedicate these Sheets to you, as this affords me an opportunity to repeat my assurances, *that I feel myself deeply interested in the prosperity of your Church; and shall never cease to lay this cause, with my other concerns, before the Throne of Grace.* Your disposition to have the blessing, on that memorable day, from him, whom you, and your evangelical brethren in the State, deign to call their Senior, supercedes the necessity of inquiring, whether, and why any importance could attach to such assurances.

To spare time, I could only deliver a part of this discourse. Thinking that what was left out useful, and in close connection with the rest, I send the whole. A reader may make intervals at pleasure—and is not so apt to be tired out as the hearer.

ONE circumstance, Gentlemen, you will permit me to add—It is not easy to control public opinion and rumor, by private explanations and corrections, though ever so much

repeated. One printed declaration may be more efficacious than a thousand conversations ; and this Discourse may fall in many hands. There are different sentiments concerning the nature of our union. Some say, both Churches are now one ; some assert they are different ; and this difference, though men of information are not at a loss to find the just scale for it, is by many extended beyond the true limits. What I therefore wish to add, is not for your information ; but for the direction of the judgment of those, who, to my knowledge, have not yet a distinct idea of our situation. You belong to the same Church I belong to—the *Evangelical Lutheran*. You are acknowledged as brethren by the Lutheran Ministry in the State, and send Deputies to it ; but you constitute a particular Congregation. You and we are at liberty to receive any person, young or old, into communion, who wishes to become a Member ; but we absolutely take no communicants from each other, without mutual consent. Communicants, we call all those who ever have been at the LORD's Table, had it only been once, in our Churches.

MAY our Almighty Common LORD bless both Congregations to the end of the days.

I am Your Sincere Brother in CHRIST JESUS.

JOHN C. KUNZE.

THE
GREAT SACRIFICE OF SOLOMON
AT THE DEDICATION OF HIS TEMPLE:

Text.

II. CHRONICLES, vii. 5.

And King Solomon offered a Sacrifice of twenty and two thousand Oxen, and an hundred and twenty thousand Sheep. So the King and all the People dedicated the House of GOD.

MY BRETHREN.

WE find among all nations, whether civilized or savage, some ceremonious solemnities, celebrated at stated times. The true objects are not always known, not even to the partakers of them, much less to strangers. That they originally were instituted as unmeaning festivals, I am, to the honor of human understanding, not inclined to admit. Jeroboam, indeed, could ordain feasts for the people, which he had devised of his own heart;* but, if we only except the philosophers at the close of the eighteenth century, who to change times and laws,† could invent the solemnities of Decades, we have reason to believe, that not many others share the merit of this wisdom with him. His political views are known; and though we detest this manner of mixing religion with politics, we must nevertheless do justice to the framer of a religion, to declare, that he

* 1 Kings, xii. 33.

† Dan. vii. 25. Rev. xiii. 17.

was not deficient in the knowledge, established by experience and common sense, that government and religion are inseparable. A government supported by a false religion, God will destroy in his own time : but a government without religion will destroy itself.

THE objects of such national solemnities are either great events, by which a nation has been benefited, or they are intended to create religious impressions. If such things are stamped with truth and importance, and the solemnities are decent and expressive, they do not merit the scorn or reprehension of the wise. They are a substitute for language, which is thought not loud and powerful enough, to create sensations, the importance of the thing is supposed to require.

UNDER the condition, just now stated, it is indifferent in what the solemnities consist. The ancients were fond of processions. The moderns make the air resound either by majestic explosions or by enchanting tunes. The soul of all such solemnities is, that the people assembles together to testify the interest they feel in the celebrated event. Expressing this interest in words alone, would confine the effect to a narrower compass, than the dignity of the object seems to require. Words indeed are signs of thoughts ; but they are not the only signs. Signs may be made with motions, gestures, writing, and with actions. If the people gathered together for such a purpose can be supposed to understand the intended thing, the solemnity is a rational one.

THE impressions expected from such signs, are either joy, or thanksgiving, or entering new obligations, or bemoaning sustained losses. Solemnities of the most noble kind are those which embrace the three first objects together. If joy alone, we are to investigate with the wise King, what it is that produces it. "Concerning laughter, I concluded, that there is no sense in it ; and joy, that the cause of it must be inquired."* Thanksgiving creates the most rational festival, for nothing can be denominated truly ra-

* Eccles. ii. 2. *What makes it ?*

tional, which does not in some degree influence the happiness of our future days. An enjoyment limited to a day or a week is not the object of a wise man. Thanksgiving creates a solemnity, which interests heaven in it, for though our gratitude to God can in no manner augment the happiness of the most happy being, yet it is the way in which he will lead us to the enjoyment of his salvation.* Offering pious resolutions and performing them is indissolubly connected with thanksgiving, (*Ps.* 50. 14.) and solemnities, having such a tendency, will never fail in a thinking soul and feeling heart, to leave vestiges auspicious for the future days. Whatever the Christian does, he does heartily as to the LORD, and not unto men.† In empty ceremonies and solemnities he will not join the crowd. Solemnities, of which he partakes, must yield him matter of substantial meditation.

WE are assembled in this place to day, my brethren, to dedicate a house unto God, for whose honor it has been built: to us, therefore, who interest themselves in this event, this is a solemn day. If it does not interest the nation, I trust, it interests heaven. If for the discovery of its foundation we search in vain the treasures of antiquity; it is the LORD's doing, who puts a new song into our mouth, marvelous in our eyes. Was not this day made for our fathers; it is made for us, and I trust for our posterity, to rejoice and be glad in it. As the service of the Christian which he renders unto God, is in general much simplified, we ought not to require the pomp of ancient days, to make our solemnities striking. We are well taught in holy writ, in what sense the MOST HIGH dwells in temples: Both Solomon in the height of his glory, when he was surrounded by his admirers, and Stephen in his dying speech, when surrounded by his murderers, speak the same language on this head. *Will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold! the heaven, and the heaven of heavens cannot contain THEE. How much less this house which I have builded,*† says the former. And the latter, who

* Psalm 23. LUTHER seems to have read a *Scbin*, instead of *Sin*, in the word *Scham*, and KENNICOT has found the *Scbin* in *Ten Manuscripts*.

† Col. iii. 23.

‡ 1 Kings, viii. 21.

sell a sacrifice to this truth, for he was charged with having uttered blasphemy against God and the temple, expressed the same sentiment with his dying lips.* *The MOST HIGH dwelleth not in temples made with hands, as says the Prophet, Heaven is my throne and earth is my footstool. What house will ye build me, saith the LORD, or what is the place of my rest?* Nevertheless, a house built for the worship of God, is stiled his habitation. Of the temple, which Solomon built, he, the MOST HIGH himself, made this declaration: *That He would dwell in the thick darkness,†* that is to say, in the most holy place, separated from the holy, which was in the strict sense, called the Temple, by a curtain, and just then enveloped in a thick cloud. *And I have surely,* continues the wise King, *built THEE an house to dwell in, a settled place for THEE to abide in forever.* What immediately precedes, shews, that in this the King did not display rhetorical skill by using figurative language, for he quoted the LORD's promise, and had before his eyes the fact. *When the priests were come out the holy place, the cloud filled the house of the LORD.‡* No man, who enjoys sound mental faculties, is supposed to contradict himself: much less have we to entertain such a supposition of a man, who is declared in our holy records, to have been the wisest of men. Seeming contradictions, therefore, will, in the most common rules of interpretation find an easy way of accommodation. Neither the gold, nor the cedar wood, nor the precious ointment brought down from heaven the glory of God, resting upon the ark in the oracle. No, He who dwells in the high place, dwells also with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble.¶ In the New Testament, we have the promise of the same LORD, whose glorious presence was promised to the Temple, in these words: *Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.*** Now of the Temple, God in the Old Testament declares, and CHRIST in the New confirms, *That the house of God shall be called the house of prayer for all people.††* Our oracle in the New Testament, is every house of prayer, dedicated to God, in the name of JESUS. If there is any difference, it is in favour of the worshippers in the new covenant, where

* Acts vii. 48, 49. † 1 Kings, viii. 12. ‡ v. 10. || Isaiah, lviii. 19.

** Matt. xviii. 20. †† Isaiah, lvi. 7. Matt. xxi. 13.

GREAT SACRIFICE.

9

we read nothing of a confinement to a mysterious darkness, to curtains, or to a Jerusalem. Wherever GOD is worshipped in spirit and truth, there is GOD, and if this is done in a particular place, built or set apart for this purpose, where we have reason to suppose, that living temples of GOD are always in the crowd, GOD will in an eminent sense dwell in that place. The conditionality of the promise, given to Solomon, and the true sense, as explained here, that the presence of such souls is the cause, and the presence of GOD the effect, was unequivocally declared by GOD to Solomon, in the following words: *Concerning this house, which thou art in building, if thou wilt walk in my statutes and execute my judgments, and keep all my commandments, to walk in them, then I will perform my word with thee, which I spake unto David, thy father, and I will dwell among the children of Israel and will not forsake my people Israel.** From these words, my brethren, I draw the most natural inference, when I declare, that the presence of GOD in this house of prayer, which we this day are dedicating to him as such, will this day, and at every future day of worship, be in just and exact proportion of the presence of living temples of GOD, which have been dedicated to him by the atoning blood and the regenerating spirit of JESUS.

THAT there are such among my present hearers, and that there always will be such, when the Gospel of the glorious REDEEMER shall be proclaimed within these walls, your zeal in the cause of religion, your cheerful and devout attendance, the doctrine intended to be propagated and supported here, and the readiness of that LORD, who declares that he will say to them, who call him, here I am, give to my own mind the most perfect assurance. Let the conviction therefore deeply impress your hearts, my evangelical brethren, that the place we dedicate this day to GOD, will be called, *Here is the LORD.*

I SHALL attempt to support this hope by some arguments drawn from a parallel. According to observations, already made, it will not be denied, that the dedication of the Temple of Solomon may be considered as such. This

* 1 Kings, v. 12.

house is intended to be an house of prayer, and so was that of Solomon. He dedicated his house to the God of Israel, in the most solemn manner ever seen on earth. The whole scene, and every part of it, is able to excite devotion and gratitude to a condescending God, who manifested his truth and mercy towards the people of his choice; but that part of it, contained in the words, which I have read as my text, must fill us with surprise. To me, however, it appears to be the most interesting in the solemnity, and the substance of the whole. In explaining these words and considering *Solomon's great sacrifice in dedicating the Temple to God*, I shall 1. lead your attention to the *Person considered as acting in the text*: 2. to the *Subject of the Solemnity*: 3. and lastly, to the *Manner of this Dedication*.

THE words of my text, indeed, mention not a person, but persons as engaged in the work of that solemn day, when the Temple was dedicated. But it is observable, that the verse contains two members: the first speaks of the performance of the sacrifice, and the second, of the end of it, which was, to dedicate the Temple unto God. The first is ascribed to Solomon exclusively: In the latter the participation of the people is expressed.

It is perhaps needless, here to observe, that this account of Solomon's act does not imply an intimation of his interfering in any of the sacerdotal functions. For this he was too wise. It is not only a very well known mode of expression in all languages, to ascribe an act to the person, for whom it is performed; but in the matter of sacrifices there would be propriety in the phrase, even if it was not justifiable by such a common rule. Sacrifices were considered as the acts of those, who were at the expences. Thus the blessed Mother of our SAVIOUR, offered as a sacrifice for her holy child, her pair of turtle doves. The actions of the servants of God are only ministerial, and this with respect to God, as well as to the people of God. This is likewise the case with the sacrifices of the New Testament. The prayer of our minister, my brethren, is our prayer, if our devotion marks the interest of the heart. But let me likewise add, that vilifying his actions, which he performs in the capacity of a church-minister, must deprive them

of all influence, intended upon our closer connection with God, and must necessarily be considered as the most unnatural deportment, because we study to stamp disgrace upon our own actions.

THIS Solomon was the builder of the Temple of God, nominated by God himself. It was his father, who first formed the pious plan. *Lo*, said he to the prophet Nathan, *I live in an house of cedar, but the ark of the covenant of the LORD remains under curtains.** Though Nathan's answer, *Do all that is in thine heart*, had the intention of confirming the King's mind for building a lasting edifice for the holy ark, yet the prophet was soon convinced, that there is a difference between the holy emotions of a pious soul and an express divine inspiration. By the latter, he had to learn in the night, that David should not build to the LORD an house to live in: one of his sons should be the person. *He shall build me an house*, God says, *and I will stablish his throne for ever. I will be his father and he shall be my son.* Learning in the New Testament,† that this Son of David intended for building the house of God, in reality was not Solomon, but CHRIST, for to him alone the language is applicable, *he shall be my son*; we discover vestiges of mysterious sublimity in all these transactions, all developed now unto us, the living members of CHRIST, in this clear and simple truth: *In CHRIST dwelleth all the fullness of God bodily.‡* Here in the proper sense God lives. If God lives and ever lived in any other soul, it is and was on account of the connection with this Son of David. From him alone the Spirit of God proceeds, for he is the Spirit of CHRIST, and no human soul ever could own God for her God, without the possession of a portion of that spirit, who without measure, or which is the same, of which the source is in CHRIST.

YET Solomon was the prefigurative person, and he had to build the typical temple. Sound and rational scripture-interpretation is not for admitting a two-fold or three-fold sense of the oracles of God: yet a further intention of ordinances and laws, God gave to his people, than is explain-

* 1 Chron. xvii. 1.

† Heb. i. 5.

‡ Col. ii. 9.

ed by the legislator, or is comprehended by the first view, is evidenced by clear apostolic interpretations, and the apostles are the men whom we must hear, if we wish to hear CHRIST. Thus what is related of the passover, *that a bone of him shall not be broken*,* St. John applies to the crucified SAVIOUR, taking it, as it seems for granted, that the Christians would find no difficulty of understanding this matter. Thus when CHRIST spoke of raising the Temple of GOD in three days, it was not a far fetched assimilation, that could justify the propriety of the expression; but after the resurrection of the LORD, they had then the perfect knowledge of the true Temple of GOD, and in that by comparing the words of the LORD with the scripture, they understood and believed the scripture.† Let me add, my evangelical brethren, that it is my humble opinion, that the now fashionable scorers of typical divinity do in reality not understand, and consequently not believe the scripture. I would not have added this observation, had I not with grief and pain to inform you, that it is in our Church in Europe, where this antitypical doctrine becomes the most fashionable. It is my devout prayer, and most lively hope in the LORD, that this poisonous doctrine, (I cannot view it in any other light, for by disuniting the Old and New Testament, and by clearly intimating, that we do not well in regarding the former, it strikes at the vitals of the evangelical doctrine,) will never disgrace this pulpit.

DAVID was not only the king of the people of GOD, ruling in the fear of GOD, but likewise the man, upon whose tongue the word of GOD was,‡ and who therefore, by Peter in the New Testament is stiled a prophet.¶ The prophets were not exempted from general human imbecility, and in many things their knowledge was confined. Yet they never mutilated the word of GOD. Oracles, they had to utter, they often made the objects of holy meditation, and they endeavoured to investigate the true sense of the Spirit of CHRIST. Thus David, though applying the divine declaration of one of his Sons, who should build the intended house, to Solomon; yet as a prophet in his divinely inspired thanksgiving

* John xix. 36.

† John ii. 12.

‡ 1 Kings, xxiii. 2, 3.

¶ Acts, ii. 30.

hymn, utters words by no means applicable to him.* It was CHRIST, who as the Son of David should be the eternal King, and it was CHRIST, who as the kingly branch should build the house of GOD. It is no matter to us, how deeply to penetrate into the true sense of this mystery was given to the prophet.† Thus much is a decided truth, that he diligently searched and that in committing the external building, designed by his holy zeal to honor his GOD, to Solomon, he had the divine approbation. No limitation of our knowledge, only the disinclination, to serve the will of GOD, is pregnant with danger.

No person perhaps was more competent to be, in this business of building the Temple, the temporary representative of the Eternal King, than Solomon. He coincided with his father's views and inclinations. To him, as to David, the fear of GOD, or true religion, was the foundation of all wisdom.‡ What now the princes of the world; yea, what now the wise and the rich: what now the generality of the professors of the christian faith would think a reproach, was his glory. *He kneeled down upon his knees, before all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth his hands towards heaven.*||

His name given to him by a prophetic impulse was verified in him by the event, that though the greatest of monarchs, he never carried on a war. His father, indeed, had shed much human blood, and this circumstance was alledged in the declaration, that not the father but the son should build the temple. David, however, in carrying on his wars, did nothing else in this, but serving the will of GOD.** Though CHRIST's kingdom is not of this world, yet it begins in this world. In this world it is the kingdom of tribulation and contention. Both David and Solomon were types of CHRIST. All the Psalms, expressly explained in the New Testament, by the inspired writers of the sufferings of our persecuted SAVIOUR, may have had their first occasion in the cruel persecutions of a Saul

* 1 Chron. xvii. 7. Ps. xvi. 10. Acts, ii. 30. † 1 Pet. i. 10.

‡ Ps. cxi. 10. Prov. i. 7. || 2 Chron. vi. 13.

** Acts, xiii. 36. In the Original, *After he in his own generation had served the will of GOD.*

or Absalom. David adapting plaintive tunes to his mournful harp, acted here too in the capacity of a prophet. He uttered words applicable quite to another victim. He, in short, was the type of the suffering, and Solomon of the triumphing king of the people of God. The christian church, my brethren, is the true temple of God, because it consists of the members of CHRIST. CHRIST, indeed, in his earthly conversation laid the foundation for this building; but cohesion, perfection and visibility it gained after his victory, where with the death likewise all contention is swallowed up, and every battle of the warrior with confused noise and garments rolled in blood, shall be with burning and fuel of fire.* CHRIST since his resurrection, is the Solomon and the prince of peace, and since that time is building his temple. On earth, as it were, the pious design was formed, and our King, like David, in his trouble had to prepare the precious materials.† As the tendency of the christian religion is to make us one spirit with God, and with every fellow-christian, no other character was suitable to build the house of God, but a Solomon. In perfect coincidence with this observation therefore, the apostle‡ denies, that the churches of God have the custom to be contentious, and another expression is as just and true, as it is strong: *The Temple of God are ye. If any man defile the Temple of God, him shall God destroy.*§ There is a remarkable contrast in admiring great names on earth and in heaven. On earth such names are obtained in war, and in heaven of our King it is written, *his rest shall be glorious.***

THAT the builder of the house of God happened to be the wisest of all men, is an observation which likewise should be taken notice of in this place. What ever changes the mode of thinking and the fashions undergo in this world, the divine judgment of true wisdom is immutable. *The fashion of this world passeth away,*†† but the wisdom of those, who assisted in building the house of God, will be appreciated by him, who is made wisdom unto us. It will be found among the gold and precious stones, which

* Isaiah, ix. 5.

|| Cor. iii. 17.

† 1 Chron. xxiii. 14.

** Isaiah, xi. 10.

‡ 1 Cor. xi. 16.

†† 1 Cor. vii. 31.

are not perishable matter as wood, hay, stubble,* though the wise men of this present age seem to surpass the wise men of Greece and Rome, in rejecting the worship of a crucified King. Stand fast in your idea of true wisdom, my brethren. This wisdom, indeed, rests upon faith, but faith which is extremely rational, and stands the test of experience, scrutiny and criticism. Open professors of unbelief, deism and atheism, whatever some may think to the contrary, we have not many in this country. Even in the world at large, they are not and never will be so numerous, as some imagine. But of a neglect of divine worship and of the exercise of the christian religion we read intimations in our holy records, that it will almost be general towards the end of the world. To avoid prolixity I defer my hearers only to ii. *Tim.* iii. 1, 5. where it is asserted, that a form of godliness will remain but the power thereof will be denied. I cannot withhold from my present hearers a word of our dear *Luther*, whom both *Calvin* and *Oecolampadius* stile the prophet of Germany, which is found among his writings.† “If the world is yet to last for a while, you will see, that the pure and true knowledge of CHRIST will perish, though the name of CHRIST will remain.” The limits of this discourse do not permit me to explain the compatibility of such an assertion with the expectation of a glorious millennium, entertained more in our days than ever by many excellent, pious and learned brethren. But if the LORD spares my life yet a little longer, I shall certainly deliver my sentiments on that head in a particular pamphlet; here I only draw this conclusion from what has been said, and indeed from the aspect of our days, clear and open to all: Christians the people will be called unto the end of days, both the great and the small, the wise and the unwise: but some deprive the doctrine of all its essentials and of all its power. Some wish to live uncontrolled and uninfluenced by any of the christian precepts, and the greatest part discontinue their membership with the church, neglect the worship, despise the teachers, withhold their contributions, exclude themselves from its ordinances. Is all this something else, but unsystematical

* 1 Cor. iii. 12.

† Tom. iii. Altenb. Fol. 651.

folly? We grant the usefulness and excellency of the christian religion. We expect its influence upon conscience, the only residence of all religion, in obtaining any of our civil rights, if contested, for no judicature can exist without oaths. We know from recent experience in the world, what a people will be without religion. We can daily hear testimonies uttered with dying lips, that the religion of JESUS is a true comfort in our last agony; yet we will be indifferent to the means of upholding this religion. Is not the world become benighted in the same degree, as it boasts of enlightened wisdom?

IN our text, with the King *the people* is likewise mentioned. There was a pleasing agreement of sentiment and sensation. Powerful is the example of the rulers upon the multitude. Were there only Davids or Solomons in the world, there would be no danger in monarchies. All the dispute about the form of governments would cease, and we would apprehend as little mischief from a head of a country as from a chief of an army. Neglect of religion has created that dread of despotism, now prevailing in the world; and the thrones, which at the close of the eighteenth century have begun to totter, will, I may venture to predict, not find in the nineteenth another remedy for their confirmation, than a true revival of religion. Hitherto few of the princes of the world have been wise enough to detect this source of their danger. The ministers of religion can hardly continue to be their advocates.

As the people agreed with the King, so they agreed among themselves. They had and felt a common cause. *Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethern thus to dwell together in unity.** Religion cannot be practised without sociability and this presupposes unity of sentiment. Though such unity seems to depend upon the understanding of men, yet the will has its principal share in it. Was this not the case, the many scriptural exhortations to unanimity would be empty words. A disposition to brotherly love would soon teach the christian world to think and act in the same manner. Not Confucius, not Mahomet is so

* Psalm cxxxiii. 1.

divided, as CHRIST appears to be. In works of art and wit general associations can be formed; but in the cause of religion the enemy of GOD has practised the old maxim: divide and govern. Let it suffice unto us, my friends, to have learned from our common LORD, whence this unhappy circumstance arose. *The enemy has done this** he declares. But his arts, our rule is, to counteract. It is not in our power, to unite the professors of the religion of JESUS into one visible church. But to love all with a tender brotherly affection, who appear to belong unto the same LORD, who is the head of our communion, will by degrees render the divisions unperceivable and present, for opposing all the maxims of hell, one flock, as there is one shepherd.

THE assembled people was penetrated with universal joy. Joy as well as righteousness and peace are the constituent parts of the kingdom of God.† I am convinced in my soul, that neglect in meeting the people of GOD, where they are gathered together, deprives us of this effect of christianity. To appear now and then, discovers a lukewarm heart to CHRIST and to his people, and such a disposition is heterogeneous to the heat communicating itself in the compact and active circles of worshippers. To our LORD it is more disgusting than avowed rejection. To such the christian church and doctrine soon looses all entertainment and energy. The attractive power of novelty being exhausted, the price is pitiful such souls reap from their contributions. Joy communicative as the electric stroke in the assembly they know not, and peace of the heart they do not carry home with them. Will you, my brethren, rejoice in CHRIST at this place, as I hope, you do this day, grieve not the Spirit of GOD, who commences his operations here, by a contemptuous neglect in future. Let many future assemblies resemble that of this day.

OUR Second consideration concerns the *Object* of the dedication, our text speaks of. It was the temple.

TEMPLES in a more general sense are places of public worship. Public worship comprehends all such acts, as in

* Matt. xiii. 28.

† Rom. xiv. 17.

the opinion of the people the Deity will receive as Signs of acknowledged dependence. Such signs are various, but those, of which divine authority, brought home to the conviction of common capacity, can be proved, constitute a rational worship. It is not necessary, that the worshippers should be able to penetrate into the connection between the cause and effect in such case. The only concern is, to have a distinct idea of the will of God. With respect to this the condescension of God has at all times provided ample means to inquiring reason, and all credulity is excluded from the truly acceptable worship. Heathens followed cunningly devised fables, and their worship could not stand the test of reason. The priests, who taught the people the manner of rendering a pleasing service to a God, instead of proving their assertions sheltered themselves behind the curtain of Mystery, and thus investigation was soon at an end. The true worship from the beginning of the world, always rested upon the authority of eye-witnesses, upon whom, in favor of posterity, God stamped some lasting marks of veracity. Clear prophecies, developed by the event, are such marks, and the performers as well as the beholders of miracles, are eye-witnesses. All the patriarchs had it in their power to strike conviction into the hearts of those, who would partake of their mode of adoring God. Moses's authority struck the external senses of a whole people, and in him we yet read prophecies, deniable only by the decided hater of God. Solomon's dedicated Temple received a divine sanction, which excluded the necessity of all philosophical demonstrations. From him, *who devised this house of worship*, and from various persons afterwards, who made use of it in the process of time, we have prophecies as monuments in our hands, which convince those who can read, hear and think, that this house and its worship was the choice of the Creator of the world.

THE people of Israel had houses of prayer dispersed in their various towns and villages. That there they assembled on their sabbaths and new moons, the place, *2 Kings*, iv. 23. I should think, alone a sufficient proof. Whether the name of Synagogues was or was not introduced until after the Babylonish captivity, is an immaterial circum-

stance. Such places had the same object with the temple. They united the people in the various acts of devotion, all tending to manifest a sense of gratitude to their Maker and a desire of his farther protection and providence, with expressed resolutions, to live according to his will. To be made acquainted with this divine will, is, and always has been, an essential part of public worship. From all these places the temple of Jerusalem differs only in two things. It was the *national house of worship*, when others were intended to comprehend the community of towns and villages, and one act of demonstrating the sense of duty to the Creator, *that of Sacrificing*, was restricted to it. To perform this species of worship in any other place, but in the national house of worship, was counted a falling off from the GOD of Israel. Before the choice of Jerusalem, there were other places appointed for that purpose, as Shiloh, Michmas, Kirjath-Jearim, Gibeon, but at any time only one, and this such a one, as had received the divine sanction. In their unsettled state they had a portable place for the purpose, called the tabernacle. Such national house of worship was always the residence of the Ark of the covenant, which may be considered as the standard of it.

THE Ark of the covenant contained the most essential and unceasingly binding parts of the moral law, comprised in ten sentences, which GOD with his own mouth from the mount Sinai had given to his people, and a few other marks of the connection subsisting between GOD and them. This Ark had a golden covering, overshadowed by two wings of symbolical figures, consisting of a mixture of quadruped, winged and human forms, which touching one another could be represented to imagination as forming a Seat. This Seat was declared to be the seat of GOD. Towards this the prefiguring blood of atonement was sprinkled, towards it prayers were directed, and this is called the *Mercy-Seat*, or the expiatory place. Here the glory of GOD appeared. From this place the voice of GOD was heard. On this throne GOD was represented as residing. The figures, which spread out towards another their wings, were emblems of the divine power, exercised by his providence on earth through the instrumentality of mighty angels. The place where this divine throne was, was sepa-

rated from the other part of the temple, called the Holy Place, by a curtain. Thus God dwelled among men, yet in a manner separated from them, because the true and eternal atonement was not yet made, and even the presence of God upon the wings of the cherubim was yet a symbolical and emblematical one, perceivable by the effects, and restraining the people from any intuitive fruition.

BUT IN CHRIST, God dwelled really (bodily).^{*} His flesh, or humanity, therefore, is stiled the curtain. The apostles seeing him, saw the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.[†] The emblem of truth in the sanctuary was in the body of the ark, and that of grace rested upon its covering. As soon as the sin of the sinner is covered by the blood of atonement, he has God's law in his heart, and God himself has made him obedient and holy. Thus it is clear, that the whole institution of the Jewish temple pointed at CHRIST. His body was the Holy of Holies, all his believers are parts, belonging to the true temple of God. He by sacrificing himself unto God, for the sanctification of the willing people, of such in the human race, as by embracing the offered grace and reconciliation with God, would shew an inclination to truth and light, and an hunger and thirst to righteousness, tore the separating curtain asunder and gave free entrance to the presence of God.

CHRIST alone is the author of salvation. His sacrifice once offered at Jerusalem, is the only cause perfecting forever them that are sanctified.[‡] This was a sufficient cause for erecting, and now in the most solemn manner dedicating to God, a monument just on this and no other spot. And as the place, so the time was likewise the most suitable, for this scene of dedication, according to a calculation, which I think exact, took place just a thousand years before the true temple appeared. To me it is pleasure to have it in my power to add, though here is not the time or place, to give my reasons, that probably the thousand years were not exceeded by one day. || That our LORD's birth

^{*} Col. ii. 9,

^{*} Heb. x. 20.

[†] John, i. 14.

[‡] Heb. x. 14.

|| My reasons for this assertion shall soon be seen in a little Chro-

fell in the same season of the year, in which the temple was consecrated by Solomon, has been maintained by characters of high literary reputation.

THOUGH Solomon's temple was intended, as we may express it, to be the national meeting-house; yet strangers were not excluded, for the house was to be called the house of prayer to all the nations*, and Solomon in his prayer did not overlook their interest, in case they *would come and pray in this house*.† It was the great recruiting house for the standard of JEHOVAH. From many faces in this mountain, the covering cast over the people was destroyed, and many sons of the stranger had joined themselves to the LORD. In this house they were incorporated into the people of Israel. Yet a time was promised by the prophets, when the knowledge of the true God should overspread the earth, as the water does the sea.‡ Truly at such time a national house of worship would not be in coincidence with the divine plan and the language of the prophets. No! of the time, which many Kings and prophets had been desirous of seeing, of the time, in which the LORD GOD laid in Zion for a foundation a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation,|| where faith in all the world will be hoisted as the standard of salvation, and messengers with the good tidings are sent from Jerusalem; the prophetic language is this: *The bed is shorter, than than a man can stretch himself on it.* Now followed the LORD's strange work. *He destroyed his house and his land, for all the earth was become the LORD's.* The near approach of this changing scene our LORD predicts in a friendly conversation with a woman of Sichar. *Woman, says he, believe me, the hour comes, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.*** Yet not to advocate heterodoxy in any manner, he immediately adds the just and true foundation of that exclusive claim, Jerusalem had hitherto enjoyed by divine authority, which he derives from the salvation, which is of the Jews. From

nological Work, under the Title: *The Chronological Character of the Year, which commences the Nineteenth Century.*

* Is. lvi. 7.

† 2 Chron. vi. 32.

‡ Hab. ii. 14.

|| Is. xxviii. 16, 20.

** John, iv, 21, 22.

the time of the appearance of this salvation and the grand proclamation sounded over all the world: *Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth,** every ground on which was seen the plummet in the Christian's hand, is a *Moriah*.—

THE manner of consecrating, ascribed in our text to Solomon, was the last point to which I desired your attention,

THE consecrating solemnity consisted, I have no reason to add chiefly, but entirely in sacrificing. Neither my text nor other parts of the records speaking of this dedication, acquaint us with other ingredients of the grandeur of the day. We indeed see a praying and kneeling King, but this was a thing essentially connected with sacrificing. When the priests were in the very act of their sacred functions, the people was praying. And of the wise Solomon we here observe the features of his pious father. In the service of the Most High he rejoiced to be *one of the people*. Truly the Kings of the earth, and the wise men, and the rich and mighty of our days, at the day, when children will judge their parents, the Queen of the south the Jews, the Ninevites those of Capernaum, will find their judgment committed to a David and to a Solomon.

It is a painful observation, yet as it is a true one, it ought not to be suppressed, that the world always becomes foolish in divine things in proportion as it grows wise in polite arts and philosophical acquirements, though I am far from believing, that true literature or philosophy has any share in the blame. When all the world was flocking to Egypt, to take a draught of wisdom there, the Egyptians worshipped a Bull, Crocodiles, Onions and Garlick. When Greece was the great reservoir of knowledge, it became also the native country of that mythology, which degrades the name of God under brutes and under brutish men. Rome in the height of her wisdom regulated peace and war by the position of intestines, the appearance of an owl or the flight of birds. On useful inventions, refinement in philosophy, correctness and elegance of language, no

* Isaiah, xlv. 22.

antecedent age has equalled the eighteenth century. Yet this is the century, in which irreligion, scepticism, and atheism, have above all precedents reared their heads, in which the essentials of the christian religion are disputed or flatly denied, in which the connection of the Old and New Testament is dissolved, and particularly in which the typical tendency of the Israelitic dispensation is derided. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews is supposed to have accommodated himself to the prevailing conceptions of Jewish Christians. The same accommodating language is ascribed to CHRIST and to all the Prophets. Even the events they predicted, were such, as they in their wisdom saw beforehand; a capacity of mind which modern interpreters sometimes call eagle-eyes. Thus no other knowledge is to be derived from the Holy Scriptures but that, afforded by consummate human wisdom. They by extolling the wisdom of CHRIST, the Prophets and the Apostles, ply off the danger from their own domestic affairs by an imposing art, unheard before. For they are persons, who eat the bread of the church, who thus new model Christianity, and in this enjoyment they wish to be continued. A Teacher in a famous University of our persuasion, has shewn and publicly avowed the rare talent of conciliation by teaching such, as cannot historically believe the gospel, to apply every phrase of Scripture to his philosophy. From his auditory a vast number of Preachers go out and ascend the pulpits of the Evangelical Church.—

I KNOW, my brethren, that the servant of the LORD, whom you have chosen to officiate in this new erected temple, does not belong to those, who corrupt the word of GOD,* but who in sincerity, as of GOD, in the sight of GOD hitherto spake and in this enlarged sphere will speak to you. But as the word of those who pretend to be of us, but in reality never were, eats as a canker, it is my duty to shew the danger and to warn for it. If CHRIST is not the atonement for our and all the worlds sins, so that he was sacrificed, or brought to death, the punishment of sin, in our stead, and that now the Eternal Holy and Just GOD appears

* 1 Cor. ii. 17.

justified in pardoning the death-deserving sinner, neither violating his truth nor justice; the Almighty God has no means to instruct us. No language can convey ideas to our understanding, making us sensible of his will and of truth. Common capacity is able in any book, ancient or modern, to distinguish symbolical and figurative language from proper signification. According to the tenor of the whole New Testament, the Death of the SAVIOUR is the hinge in which our religion moves. It is the theme of the eternal hymn. The Lamb in the midst of the Throne will receive incessant praises, *that He was slain and has redeemed us to God by his blood.** This truth is of such importance, that you can shew me no page in the writings of his apostles, where this distinguished feature of the religion of JESUS does not at the first opening meet the view. With what both tenderness and elevation true piety in every period of the christian church, has cherished this doctrine, histories of pious characters and a conversation with experienced Christians will soon discover. Every emotion of gratitude proceeds from this source; every effusion of the spirit of grace and supplications is tinged with the blood of atonement. Paul, who does not hesitate to lay the curse upon an angel from heaven, who would preach a gospel different from his, gives us the essence of his gospel in these words: *That we have the redemption through his blood, with the explanatory clause, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace.†* Free grace and reconciliation with GOD through the Death of CHRIST, is the substance of the Gospel, not the reformation of life, which is the inseparable consequence of it. Believing in this infinite love of GOD, by which he receives the death of his Son, as a sacrifice for us to our justification, fills all our veins with gratitude. This he in another place expresses thus: *The Love of GOD is shed abroad in our hearts by the HOLY GHOST.‡* Believing in CHRIST is receiving him as SAVIOUR and LORD. Faith therefore discovers the disposition of our will. But as we, weakened by the flesh, could not perform it, nor even direct our will to the objects of the pleasure of GOD, the power of the Almighty GOD can now interfere, for we are touched with the live coal ta-

* Rev. v. 9.

† Eph. i. 7.

‡ Rom. v. 5.

ken from the altar.* The Lamb standing as it had been slain,† having the spirit of power and knowledge, opens the book for us, and his spirit helps our infirmities. On our part readiness and disposition is required. Such as have this, receive the Gospel, if they come under its sound, as it is. Perfecting the good work is the province of the same regenerating and sanctifying Spirit of the Almighty REDEEMER, who began it. It is impossible for me to bid him GOD speed, who brings not this doctrine.

THE criterions of truth were with equal lustre stamped upon the doctrine of the old, as of the new covenant. GOD is an unchangeable being. His plan is the same from the foundation of the world. If he has taught in the New Testament, that as there is a great commandment, the Love of GOD, so there is a great tenet of faith, the redemption of mankind; the same were his sentiments in the Old Testament. The Supreme Love of GOD runs through all the law and the prophets: so the cardinal tenet through every part of worship. If the service of bloody offerings is deducible from condescension and accommodation to nonsensical heathenish usages, the Levitical service was an irrational one indeed, and by no means becoming him, by whom are all things. It is true, that the Heathen offered to their idols bloody sacrifices, and we have in the New Testament the information, that these idols were devils. Is there any necessity for admitting, that the worship of the devils preceded the worship of the True GOD in the world? Is there a vestige in history, that the Egyptians sacrificed prior to the separation of Israel from them? One declaration of Moses made to Pharaoh, I should think, would be sufficient to enlighten us on that head. When the hardened despot was willing to enter into compromise, but hazarded new resentments of heaven by a persevering refusal of the main point, the departure from the country, Moses gave the reason, why they could not perform their sacrifices in the land: *It is not meet so to do, for we (would) sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians to the LORD our GOD. Lo! shall we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes and will they not stone us?*† This

* Isaiah. vi. 6.

† Rev. v. 6.

‡ Exodus, viii. 26.

may prove the antiquity of their bull-service, but it is decidedly against the antiquity of their bloody sacrifices. And is there any book or account in the world, that surpasses in antiquity our Bible? Or is there a people mentioned that sacrificed before Abel? What difficulty is there in the solution, all christian teachers have given of these heathenish sacrifices, which could not have a reference to the great atoning sacrifice, which is now the standard of the christian faith; *that they were remnants of customs introduced into the world before its depravation by idolatry?*

THUS the original tendency of the institution, to bring bloody sacrifices to the LORD, knew nothing else, but the meritorious death of the promised SAVIOUR of the world. He alone, whose sprinkled conscience has perceived the power of this event, is able thus to appreciate this work of GOD, as not to think millions of streams of prefiguring blood too much to impress the human soul with the importance of a SAVIOUR dying for sinners. The obscure ideas, the performers of these solemnities may have had of the signified thing, is no objection against the mystery itself. It is enough, they understand it now, and we, previous to our intuitive fruition, whilst yet running the race of faith, learn from the Old Testament, what kind of ransom it was, that should be testified in due time.* Upon this foundation alone rested the temple. For this reason alone it stood where Abraham the faithful made the awful preparation to immolate the only one. For this reason alone the just and proper manner of dedicating the Temple to GOD, the wisest of men could pursue, was offering an immensity of sacrifices.

SOLOMON offered oxen and sheep. The leading idea in contemplating sacrifices, is, that the death of an innocent person is received for the guilty. In this respect the choice of the victim among the different species of creatures is indifferent. Even birds are not excluded. But as the application of the atoning death of the SON of GOD, the consideration of his Person, his eternal Godhead, and his spotless Humanity, the sinner who is to be justified, and the effect, as it consists in peace of the mind, freedom of ac-

* 1 Tim. ii. 6.

cess, and newness of life, yield different annexed ideas, we have reason to suppose, that particular victims have particular views. On the day of the national atonement, a bullock was brought for the high-priest, and a goat for the people. To consecrate a priest, a bullock was likewise required. The probability of the inference is easily felt, that nothing can be of more important consequences, than the purity or impurity of those, who declare the statutes of God, and take his covenant in their mouth. As the priests were to be the chief agents and the domestics of this house now consecrating, the King felt a particular concern for this order. Let us, this day, my brethren, give efficacy to similar sentiments; for they were harbored in the breast of a wise man. Let us offer up to the throne of grace our supplication for those, that serve and in future will serve this tabernacle. Let us implore the Chief Shepherd of all the souls, that he, for the sake of his precious blood, the price for which he bought his flock, would prevent for ever from this sanctuary, unpurified labourers, mere moralists, strangers to justifying grace, orators, who harangue from hear-say, priests, who sacrifice truth and conscience at the shrine of popularity, wolves, who would not spare these dear souls and their successors, hearts dissimilar to that of the high-priest, untouched with the feelings of the infirmities of others, and insensible to the constraining love of JESUS, men of this world, modeled after the fashion of the day, labouring on this ground, and undermining beneath, serving God within these walls, and mammon without, studying high-flown words and suppressing the name, that is above every name, and servants, who either ignorant or unmindful, that besides preservation, their master expected usury and gain, hid his talent, content for themselves alone to escape the severity of the judge, without averting the danger from those committed to them.

As for priests, so for whole congregations bullocks were the usual offerings, as we may judge from *Numb.* xv. 24. I hope, members of this congregation, this consideration will turn out to your spiritual advantage. You see this day

* Exodus, xxix. 1.

within your new walls a respectable number of fellow-christians convened. All those who came hither from principle and not by dint of novelty and emulation, will feel themselves interested in your behalf. They will intercede for you with their and your LORD, that you may be and remain an holy congregation. They will join in the wish of my soul, that this congregation may be and to the day of his coming remain one of the golden candlesticks, in the midst of which the LORD JESUS walks. That it may be a vineyard, of which the keepers with regularity may pay their thousands to the owner. The time is over, my brethren, when Protestant parties could exclude each other for the sake of unessential dissensions from the interest in the affections of the common LORD. Thou art our sister, will now be the language, be thou the mother of thousands and millions. In a city populous and growing as New-York, there are and always will be, thousands who have not joined other congregations yet, and the blessing, with which we this day bless this our sister-church, may be verified without injuring any of the other congregations, which are CHRIST'S, as this is.

For the people individually considered the common offerings were sheep or other cattle of the smaller species. Such Solomon likewise offered on that auspicious day in abundance. To prove such a tendency, the consideration of the passover will be sufficient. This was such a kind of sacrifice that had reference to each individual of the children of Israel. Some indeed deny that the passover had the nature of a sacrifice, but for too trifling reasons. I could name most respectable authors, who prove, that to all intents and purposes it belonged to this species of ordinances.* Its blood came on the altar, its fat was burnt. But it was a sacrifice of a particular kind and had its singularities. When the flesh of other sacrifices, that were not burnt-offerings, was to be eat by priests only and on the holy place, this eat by all the people made every Israelite a priest and every house in Jerusalem a temple. It prefigured the abrogation of all distinction of men, the universal union under CHRIST, and the manner of enjoying

* BOCHART, HACKSFAM, BROCKMANN, CLOFFENBURG.

the future great sacrifice of the Redeemer of mankind, which is done by being united with him. It may, therefore, in a particular manner be stiled a popular offering. And for this a lamb was chosen. *Where Priests are cloathed with righteousness, the Saints will shout for joy. Where they are cloathed with salvation, the Saints will shout aloud for joy.** There is nothing so popular in the world as the christian religion. Here the language is: *Whether Paul or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are CHRIST's; and CHRIST is GOD's.†* It is the nation, says John, *for which JESUS should die,‡* and to watch in so serious a matter against mis-interpretation, he immediately adds: *and not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one, the children of GOD, that were scattered abroad.* It is you, therefore, dear souls, for which JESUS has died. This is the matter, that will procreate that constraining love in the breast of the servant of GOD, who glorying in this cause, to be one of the people, and having learned of the LORD himself, like Paul, *that the Son of GOD loved him and gave himself for him,||* will stand here upon his watch and exclaim: *be ye reconciled to GOD.* Let, O Saviour of this people! this watchward of the man not be unanswered. Let souls learn on this place to appreciate the dignity of souls, for whom CHRIST died. Let damsels addressed in this house: *will thou go with this man?* return the speedy answer: *I will go.* Let the piece of ground, now enclosed, LORD JESUS, be blessed with blessings of heaven above and with blessings of the deep, that lieth under. Let it drink in the unceasable showers, formerly so peculiar to the evangelical climate, where the labourer knew nothing but JESUS the crucified, and thus cause it to yield its increase.

THOUGH thousand discourses would not exhaust my text, I shall only add one circumstance more for its illustration. The number of oxen and sheep here offered by Solomon and by the people, for according to 2 *Chro.* v. 6. the people besides him sacrificed numbers that could not be told nor numbered for multitude, seems to exceed all

* Ps. cxxxii, 9. 16. † 1 Cor. iii. 22. ‡ John xi. 51, 52. || Gal. ii. 20.

bounds. A few observations on this head will close our meditation. All the demands of God on our liberality are in proportion of the gifts he has bestowed on us. *Solomon gave yet less in giving all these offerings, than the widow by contributing her two mites.** Mary offering two turtle-doves offered more. *Acceptable are our gifts if we give according as we have, not according as we have not.†* Mary was fully impressed with the magnitude of her acquisition in having become the mother of the Son of God. An exertion to offer at this time with the wealthy a sheep instead of doves, we would conclude to have been natural. But if Paul's rule be the standard, this exertion would have been without the line of her duty. She would in doing so have pretended to belong to the rich. In sacrificing to our God, for Christians offer sacrifices for maintaining the household of God and the suffering brethren, we have no command, except in quite extraordinary circumstances, either to sacrifice our own welfare or our domestic peace. But as unto God are known all his works, so all his gifts. If Solomon had given less, his giving, perhaps, would have been a matter of covetousness. CHRIST sits over against the treasures of churches, and beholds how people cast money into them.‡ Whilst the church-rulers only sum up the amount, his calculation is more critical and ponders the givers. I speak this day, not in the church that supports me, yet, I speak in a church intended to support the doctrine I preach. May I not, therefore, be allowed to use a little more boldness than I am used to do in my own affairs? Let, my hearers, I beseech you, in behalf of this fine new Temple, which you are assisting to dedicate to the same LORD, whom you adore in your temples, let this consideration at the close of this inaugural service influence your liberality; and look, when you give, with a simple eye to your attending master.

BUT what in this point of view outweighs all other considerations, is the thing signified. If my idea of CHRIST's mediatorial death, being the center of all religious worship and duty, is correct, if the expression, that the world is made through CHRIST, has only its reference to the redemp-

* Mark, xii. 14.

† 2 Cor. viii. 12.

‡ Mark xii. 41.

tion through his Dying Love ; if without his blood there is no forgiveness of sin ; if the Lamb slain, is the Mercy-Seat in heaven, exhibiting before God and angels, the true atoning blood, as an eternal monument of love to the race, the nature of which he took on him and for which he laid down his life ; I see no extravagance in the business, when Solomon offers this number, Asa, seven hundred bullocks, Hezekiah, a thousand, with ten thousand sheep, when every morning and every evening a sheep is sacrificed ; on the sabbaths and new moons seven, and more on the festivals : when at the time of Josephus, the blood of two hundred and fifty-five thousand and six hundred lambs is poured out at the altar ; for the true object was prefiguring the great sacrifice of Golgotha.

INTO this scale is to be thrown one consideration more. The priests and levites lived on holy oblations. We may suppose, that they all were present at Jerusalem, at the dedication of the temple. This tribe, at the time of Solomon, contained at least, four hundred and twenty-three thousand one hundred and eighty-seven males, of which one hundred thousand may have been men of thirty, fit for holy functions. They all had their shares in this boundless liberality of the King. It is the will of God, that such days shall be days of joy. You see, my brethren, the pattern of a wise man on a dedication-day. Your liberality at the close of this service, will, indeed, be only employed in a partial exoneration of this house from the incurred debt : but you well know the final result of such an exoneration in favour of the Levite.

EVEN the exact number of the sacrifices, mentioned in our text, in my opinion, is not without a particular view. At an enumeration made by Moses and Aaron, the tribe of Levi contained twenty-two thousand males.* Though this number since that time may have doubled itself almost twenty times, yet that contained in the sacred records, and known so well to every Israelite, may have served as an emblem to signify the tribe selected for the ministry in the

* Numb. iii. 39.

Temple. Thus God has the name of every individual on record, who is engaged in his service.

CONCERNING the number of sheep sacrificed, it is my opinion, that Solomon counted one thousand sheep for every tribe, but for the two, which were in the actual possession of the holy ground, upon which the house of God was erected, that emblematical number, found in the same records, *Numb. ii. 4, 23, Judah contained seventy-four thousand and six hundred, and Benjamin, thirty-five thousand and four hundred effective men.* These numbers added to ten thousand gives us the amount corresponding with our text. The line between Benjamin and Judah, ran through the midst of the Temple. It is the general opinion of the Jewish doctors, that the most holy place or oracle was in the tribe of Benjamin, which circumstance throws a light upon that place, *Deut. xxxiii, 12, the beloved (thing) of the LORD shall dwell in safety.* When God, (*Lev. xvi, 16*), commands an expiation of his own sanctuary, he adds as a reason, *that thus he may dwell in the midst of their uncleanness;** which may in a particular manner be applicable to the tribes that were the nearest to the habitation of the Holy One. The more we are concerned in divine things, the more we want the atoning blood and daily pardon. It is an observation of many, particularly ascetical interpreters of the New Testament, that it is on this account, that St. Paul adds in the salutation, directed to labourers in the work of God, mercy to grace and peace.† When Joab had to execute a kingly command, of which he felt the unlawfulness, he stopped the execution, when he came to Benjamin,‡ though the intention of the King for enumerating the people was general. Extending the unlawful action to the very spot where the holy ark stood, appeared too abominable to him. That sins done on the place, which we to-day dedicate to the living God, and which we with as full a right, as Hagar had, may call: *Thou God seest me*, be it commission or omission, wantonness or maliciousness, would be of a nature equally aggravating, is an inference from the observation, the justice of which, I think, every

* In the Original.

† 1 Tim. i. 2. 2 Tim. i. 2. Titus i. 4.

‡ 1 Chron. xx. 6.

one of my hearers perceives. He lives, and consequently sees and observes here, attracted not by your walls, but by your hearts determined from this day to become here the receptacles of his Spirit.

BUT what was able to scatter all doubts concerning these initiatory sacrifices, was the most glorious heavenly sanction, the first verse of the seventh Chapter in the Second Book of the *Chronicles* acquaints us with. *When Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came down from Heaven and consumed the burnt-offerings and the Sacrifices; and the Glory of the LORD filled the house.** The burnt-offerings were by this holy fire entirely consumed; and of the other Sacrifices those parts, which always belonged to the fire of the altar.

A SIMILAR sanction had before received the Tabernacle under the administration of Aaron, and a sacrifice of Elijah on the mount Carmel received afterwards the same. This fire was an emblem of the Spirit of GOD. That heart alone and none else partakes of the efficacy of the Sacrifice of CHRIST, that has secured this seal. None else is reconciled to GOD, none else is entitled to say: *JESUS is my LORD.†* This Spirit is the free gift of GOD, descending from heaven, which humble and contrite hearts are capable of receiving. Hearts of this description alone are hungry and thirsty after righteousness. All this in confirmation of these two pillars of Christianity, with which it must stand or fall. *The unchanged and natural man has no right to approach GOD, and after seeing it restored to him, by the gospel preaching a-reconciled God, he has no power, to make use of it.*

FROM the holy fire, which thus descended from heaven, the fire of the Altar was kindled and always kept up, and from this fire of the altar the holy lamps were furnished. To every future sacrifice this fire was applied, but there was no new visible descending, that upon Carmel only excepted, because the ten tribes, by a religious oppression of their King, were deprived of their connection with the

* 2 Chron. vii. 1.

† 1 Cor. xii. 3.

Temple, and GOD, who knew his true worshippers in Israel, had to establish a new order of things among them.

THE visible effusion of the holy Spirit of JESUS on the great Pentecost, happening seven weeks after the true and eternal reconciliation of mankind with GOD, was the anti-type of this event. Long before the disciples had acknowledged JESUS as their LORD, *and flesh and blood had not revealed unto Peter what he knew of him, but the Father, who is in heaven by this very Spirit.** But this sanction, which struck the organs of hearing and seeing, had for its object the conviction of unbelievers. As no dedication of particular Synagogues, and even not the Temple restored under Zerubbabel, witnessed similar departures from the laws of nature, no congregation of the new covenant will demand or expect external signs. No! that *sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and the cloven tongues, like as of fire sitting on the apostles†* being over, the presence of GOD is more declared by a *still small voice,‡* than either by great strong winds, rending mountains, and breaking in pieces the rocks, or by earth-quakes, or by fire, in which too often GOD is not. On the Pentecost of the New Testament,|| CHRIST has been declared the Son of GOD with power, the sufficiency of his once offered sacrifice attested, and the persons, who had to declare this truth to the world authenticated. We embrace now the faith on a crucified SAVIOUR, on the authority of the first witnesses thus signalized, who had the first fruits of the spirit, by virtue of which, they *casted out devils, spoke with new tongues, took up serpents, and drank unhurt deadly things.*** But as truly, as every sacrifice in the Old Testament was to be salted with the same fire that had descended from heaven, the inward perception of the operating spirit of our LORD must be an indispensable requisite to insure our interest in his eternal redemption obtained for us.

THAT your simple eye may only be directed to this object in your new temple, my brethren; that you may learn on this place this only wisdom, that through the death of

* Matt. xvi. 17.

† Acts ii. 2.

‡ 1 Kings xix. 17

|| Rom. i. 4.

** Mark xvi. 17, 18. Mark ix. 49.

the Son of God, you are privileged, here to worship the Father; that, if human imbecility, not separable even from the officiating servant of God, may now and then lead the ministers of your choice by a mistaken zeal or a confined knowledge to exceed or fall short of the just bounds in many things, which brotherly love is always ready to cover in this manner: *Whether we be besides ourselves, it is to God, or whether we be sober (moderate) it is for your cause,** the inculcation of the doctrine, that Jesus died for you, and that his converting and regenerating spirit must perceivably seal your interest in this event, cannot easily be overdone, was the main point of the brotherly exhortation, which to deliver, you so kindly invited me. Thus in Judah God is known. Thus his name is great in Israel. Thus in Salem is his tabernacle and his dwelling-place in Zion. For this reason the Lord loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. Thus God standeth in the congregation of the mighty. How amiable are thy tabernacles O Lord of Hosts! Seeing then, my dear brethren, your house is to rest on this basis, O! speak, if you ever have felt the power of the redemption through the Blood of Jesus, speak and address your crucified Master this day in the language of the man, whose only concern was not to be separated from the house of God: *LORD I have loved (I love) the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth†.* As to me, I conclude with feeling all the power brotherly love and the truth as it is in Jesus, can inspire, *Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces; For my brethren and companion's sakes, I will now say: Peace be within thee. Because of the house of the LORD our God, I will seek thy good.‡*

* 2 Cor. v. 13.

† Ps. xxvi. 8.

‡ Ps. cxxii. 7, 8, 9.

END OF THE SERMON.

PRAYER.

COME down upon this thy Flock, O thou Spirit of JESUS, the crucified. Lo, we have been Sacrificing the first time on this place, and we know of no other ornamental solemnity to decorate the Dedication of this Temple. Speaking of our interest in his meritorious death, singing his praises for having purchased his Flock with his own blood, and pouring out joined supplications to him that loved us, and made us Kings and Priests unto GOD his Father, that he would enable us, to walk worthy of such a REDEEMER, of such a ransom, and of such a vocation, wherewith we are called, and in consequence of the bloody sacrifice, which has perfected forever them that are sanctified, presenting our bodies a living sacrifice, is the reasonable service, intended to be brought to our GOD on this place. LORD OUR GOD! may it forever be holy and acceptable unto THEE. May nothing unclean enter! May thy holy seal be impressed upon these our first fruits, offered at our first entrance into the tabernacle of the LORD. A sensation penetrating this assembly, how dreadful is this place! This is none other but the house of GOD, and this is the gate of heaven—and a happy experience of souls, as an earnest on this initiation-day, added to the LORD, who having this hour received an open heart to attend unto the things spoken, would exclaim at the end of this first service: Surely the LORD is in this place and I knew it not, we will in deep humility acknowledge as such a seal from thy hand.

AND concerning all the future assemblies at this place, we pray for thy blessing, Father of our LORD

JESUS, that none would be without some monuments of thy working spirit, that thy Son may in this house see his seed and the reward for the travail of his soul and be satisfied, because thou hast made his soul an offering for sin. Sinners therefore, even the great and the strong let in this house become his spoil.

As a sweet savour, let from this place ascend the hymns and the prayers, thy people shall offer thee in the beauty of holiness, and have thou then respect unto this people and unto their offerings, as formerly unto Abel.

BLESS the word, thy servant shall speak on this place. Let it be a hammer and fire. Make him mighty through it to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imagination and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every tho't to the obedience of **CHRIST**. Let the hardness of the sinner be melted into tears of repentance, and the weak vessel of the Believer be made strong, to comprehend the fulness of grace. May many a Publican, after having secured his share in the Mercy-Seat, return justified to his house; and thus satiate the soul of thy servant, laboring in this Vineyard, with fatness, and give him the wish of his heart. May such events often recreate body and soul.

WITHHOLD not from those, who shall appear at the holy table, prepared in this house to thy people against their enemies, their wedding-garment, whenever they shall make due application for it. May each Sacrament-Day, kept in this house, create a festival in heaven; and may the Guests never dread the appearance of the King, when he comes to see them. May mercy and grace, may peace and righteousness, may joy in the **HOLY GHOST**, be the seasonings of

these holy Communion; and new obedience, new strength, new brotherly love, a ripeness for heaven, and a longing for home be the fruit of them.

BLESSED be to the LORD the young Lambs, initiated to this Flock in future in this Church and in the Congregation, through the holy Font. May it truly be the Fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness. May those who swear on this place allegiance to the LORD, perform it with a tender conscience, and become pillars of the Church upholding Zion's hope for the latter days.

BLESS the present and future Rulers of this Church. Let them always by an happy experience witness the truth, that as a nearness to the altar requires a nearer connection with GOD, through the Mediator and his blood of the Covenant, so his horn of salvation will never fail to pour out upon them its double portion of bliss for body and soul; and their work done in the LORD will, in time and eternity, not lose its reward.

WATCH over this thy house day and night. Surround it with a flaming wall against all sorts of enemies and worldly dangers. Make it the spiritual birthplace of thousands; the asyle for the oppressed, mournful and weeping; the garden, whither the beloved goes to see the fruits of the valley, to see whether the vine flourished and the pomegranates budded. Write on many foreheads in this house the name of thy Father, who know no greater concern in the world, but that they might obtain the good thing, that the heart be established with grace. Let many dead souls come to life by the vivifying sound, coming from this place, as it were individually to their heart: Thy sins are forgiven.

HEAR all the complaints of Zion in this thy Zion. Should war rage; should pestilence scourge this city or land; should famine visit the guilty people; should the fire of thy wrath have descended and devoured the habitations and property of citizens, who worship here, or for whom thy people convened at this place from brotherly affection and christian duty, interest themselves; should our heaven above be brass, and the earth under us iron; should our rain be powder and dust; should the locust eat what the palmer-worm has left, the canker-worm the leavings of the locust, and the caterpillar them of the canker-worm; hearken, O Father of tender mercy! to the cries of a supplicating congregation, that here speaks, because it believes in the sacrifice brought by the Son.

HEAR all the prayers for the promotion of thy kingdom, the preservation of sound doctrine, the increase of the number of living souls, the propagation of the glorious Gospel among Gentiles, the suppression of vice and immorality, blasphemy, scandal and atheism, profanation of thy Sabbath, and of houses of wickedness and impurity, that bring a curse upon the land. Hear the intercessions for the afflicted, the sick, the dying, the widow, the orphan, the traveller, and the innocent in confinement. Accept, in tender mercy, the praises offered up to Thee in this place in the name of JESUS the crucified; and whether the solitary Publican sues here for mercy, or two or three gathered together, claim the sensation of the promised presence; or a repenting, a weeping, an interceding or a praising multitude will here be thronging Thee and pressing Thee; *Make them joyful in thy House of Prayer! AMEN!*

After the Congregation had chanted their first Hymn, and the Pastor of the Congregation, the Rev. Mr. STREBECK, on the Reading-Desk, had invited the Holy One of Israel in a most fervent Prayer to this House as his habitation, the Author of the foregoing Discourse pronounced from the Pulpit the following Form of

DEDICATION.

IN the Name of the FATHER, the SON, and the HOLY GHOST, Amen. We Dedicate this House as an English Evangelical Lutheran Church, under the name of ZION, to God, the Almighty maker of heaven and earth, through JESUS CHRIST, his Son, our Redeemer and Lord, for the operation of his Holy Spirit, when here his praises are sung, to him supplications are poured out, and the People, old and young, is instructed in the Word of God, contained in the Old and New Testaments of the Holy Bible, according to the explanation of the unaltered Augustan Confession.

207914A

A

REVIEW

OF THE

REV. DR. CHANNING'S DISCOURSE,

PREACHED AT THE DEDICATION

OF THE

SECOND CONGREGATIONAL UNITARIAN CHURCH,

NEW YORK,

DECEMBER 7, 1826.

William E. Channing

BOSTON:

HILLIARD, GRAY, LITTLE, AND WILKINS.

1827.

1 R 1 p. v. 6